

PLANNING COMMITTEE DATE: 28th July 2021

APPLICATION NO: F/YR20/1123/F

SITE LOCATION: Woadmans Arms, 343 High Road, Newton-In-The-Isle, Wisbech

UPDATE:

National Planning Policy

On the 20th July the Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). There are no changes to the NPPF which have a material effect on the consideration of this application, however the paragraph numbers referred to in the Committee report have been amended as follows:

Para 79: Housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities.

Para 119: Promote effective use of land

Para 120: Opportunities and benefits of the reuse of land

Para 121: Be proactive about bringing forward redevelopment sites

Para 123: Take a positive approach to alternative land uses

Para 130: Well-designed development

Para 134: Development that is not well-designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies.

Further responses received

8 further responses have been received in relation to the revised plans (including a response from the dwelling immediately to the south of the application site noted in paragraph 10.25 of the main report), noting the following objections.

- New dwellings have been moved closer to the boundary of the dwelling to the south, and they will be wider and taller than the existing building. This will create a dominant effect.
- The existing building is of no merit and constructing a replica represents poor design.
- Still have concerns over the accesses proposed. No provision for visitor parking.
- Why approve access onto Westfield Road – impact on those dwellings would be unacceptable.
- The proposal is unacceptable for the size of this road and is not needed.
- Proposals will impact on neighbouring privacy.

A written response has been received from Ward Cllr Clark stating the following:
As ward councillor I attended a meeting with the residents of Westfield Rd, this is the cul-de-sac behind the Woadmans Arms. Westfield Rd is a safe environment for the children to play and is almost a mile from the only public open space in the village. The proposed development includes vehicular access to the boundary of the site adjoining Westfield Rd. Residents are concerned that this will allow construction traffic to access the site.

If Permission is granted, please include a condition preventing any access from Westfield road.

A further written response has been received from Ward Cllr Humphreys in relation to the proposal stating the following:

It is still my view that that the property was purchased as a development opportunity and retention as a public house was never seriously considered, hence my earlier comments which I will not repeat.

I am disappointed by the officer recommendation because once lost the chances that the village will get another pub are extremely slim. The loss of yet another facility, like the school, will not serve this village well and should be resisted, a view shared by other objectors.

I have other concerns regarding the application to redevelop, the design, the density, the highway, this is not a good alternative if one has to be considered.

As Ward Councillor I support the concerns raised by local residents especially regarding access to Westfield Road, surely any access afforded by the covenant was given up when the agricultural land to which access was required was granted planning permission as Westfield Road.

Convenant Access to rear

The site plan shows a rear “Gravel driveway access to rear as per covenant”. This has generated a substantial level of concern in respect of the proposals. The plans also however state “Existing perimeter boundary to remain all around the site”. The access relates to a covenant on the land previously required to give access to the agricultural land on which Westfield Road was built. It was therefore present throughout the lifetime of the operation of the public house, and it can be seen from historic street photography that the pub car park was located in a similar position to the proposal, also facilitating access onto Westfield Road had the covenant been actioned. The previous post and rail fence in place between the pub car park and Westfield Road has been replaced by a closeboard fence of considerably more substantial construction, discouraging its use. It is also noted that the intervening land is now within the ownership of the Highways Authority and further consents would therefore be required to formalise any such access or undertake works to the tree located on the land.

The remaining matters identified as part of the revised consultation and received from the Ward Councillors all relate to points previously identified and considered within the main report, and the conclusions in that regard remain as per the main report.

Recommendation: The recommendation remains to grant planning permission as per the main report